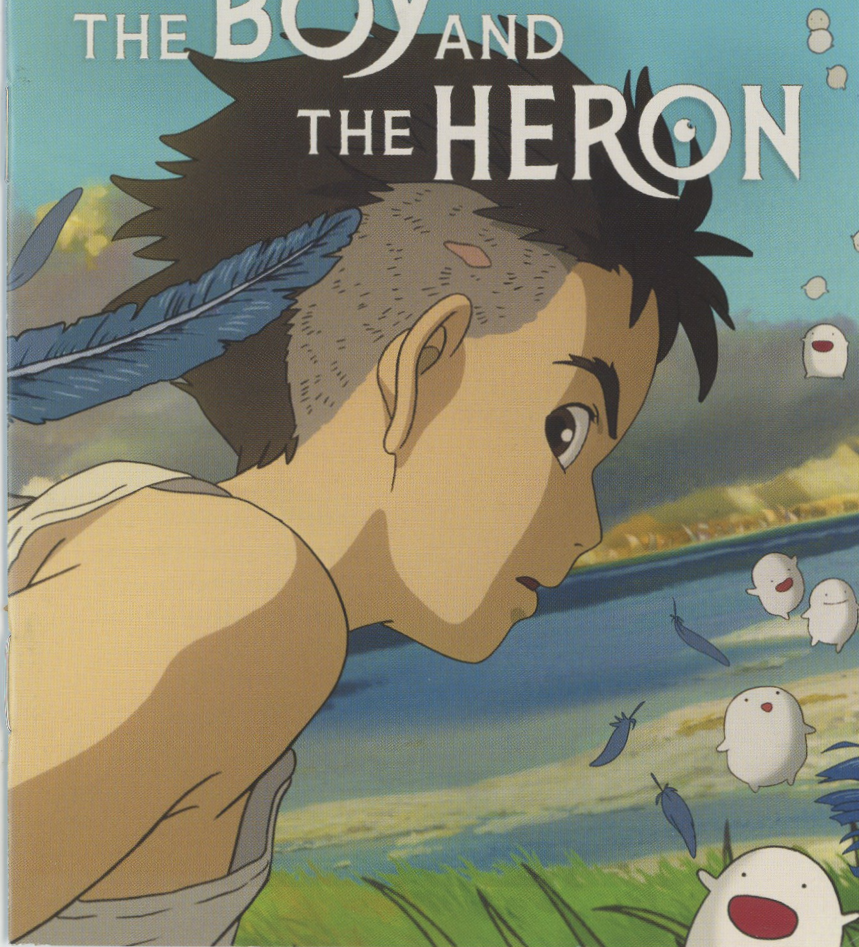


A STUDIO GIBLI FILM

THE BOY AND THE HERON





INTRODUCTION

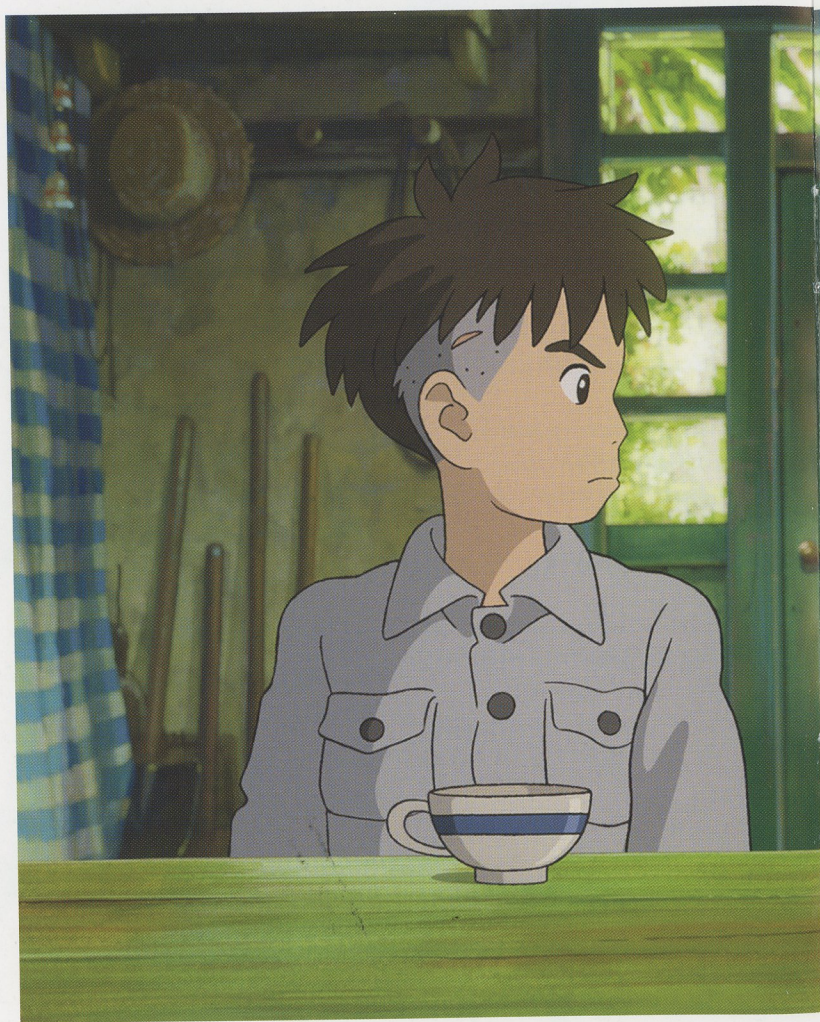
A young boy named Mahito
yearning for his mother
ventures into a world shared by the living and the dead.
There, death comes to an end,
and life finds a new beginning.

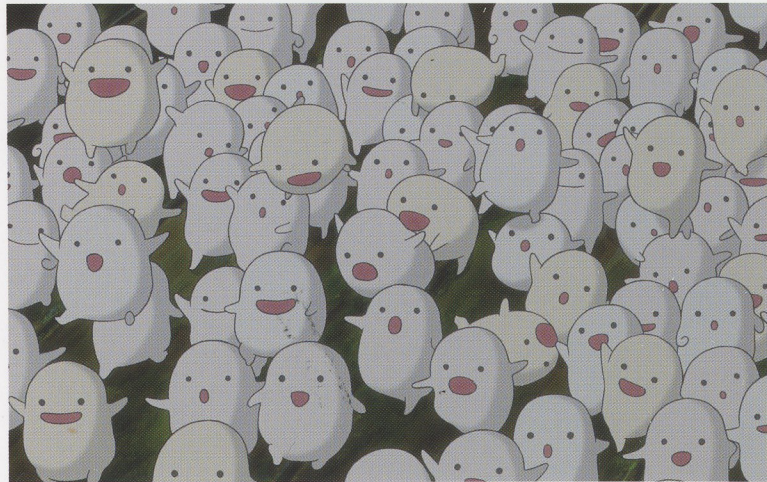
Mahito's guide
is part-heron, part-man,
and cunningly juggles lies and the truth.

The boy makes new friends,
reunites with his mother,
and meets the world's creator, the Granduncle.

"I'm so glad you were here."

A semi-autobiographical fantasy
about life, death, and creation,
in tribute to friendship,
from the mind of Hayao Miyazaki.





FEATURE FILM PROPOSAL NOTES: CAN WE MAKE A FEATURE FILM?

ISSUES WITH THE DIRECTOR

There's nothing more pathetic than telling the world you'll retire because of your age, then making yet another comeback. Is it truly possible to accept how pathetic that is, and do it anyway? Doesn't an elderly person deluding themselves that they're still capable, despite their geriatric forgetfulness, prove that they're past their best? You bet it does.

It's all very well to drag in others and cause a heap of trouble yet still finish a film, but it's also entirely possible that you could become bedridden or die come crunch time. The instigator himself might be fully prepared for that, but for those who'd end up burdened with an incomplete mishmash of a film, it would be unbearable. Feature-length films take at least three years to complete. I could do one in a year when I was in my 40s, but now I'm 75, it's a lot to get done in three years, and I'm tempted to say, "Let me work on it till I'm 80." Well, that's something that Paku-san (fellow filmmaker Isao Takahata) went through already, so presuming that whoever's producing the film has the determination to push ahead to completion, the real conundrum is: what will the world be like in three years time?

What state will the world and minds of viewers be in when they greet our film? Surely our current age, indistinctly drifting, indefinable, and indiscernible, is reaching its end? Isn't the world as a whole in a state of flux?

We could be heading for war or disaster, or perhaps even both. In times like these, when making a film that'll take three years to complete, what shape should it take...?

First, something emphatically peaceful, like *Totoro*. *Totoro II* perhaps?



We could do that. I get the feeling we could make something worthwhile. That's just a feeling, but if war were to break out, it could be even more meaningful.

Secondly, a film set during wartime. A film ahead of its time, made with the realization that the times could catch up with us before we're able to complete it.

The film must not pander to its era. If I could be inhumanly irresponsible, I'd like to make a film about the Battle of the Yalu River in the Sino-Japanese War, but that's just a personal predilection. Scratch that.

SCHEDULE: (ALL HANDWRITTEN)

2016: Screenplay commences in July

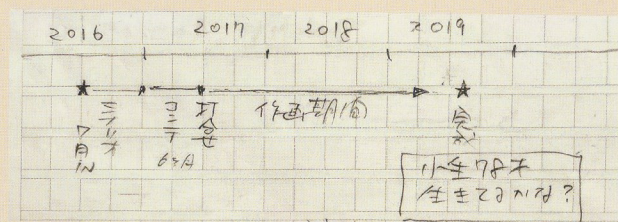
2017: Storyboarding (six months), meeting

2018: Key drawing period

2019: Completion

I'll be 78 by then.

Will I still be alive?





STAFF ORGANIZATION:

"Zombie Ghibli" won't do. We'll have just about enough key animators, but who should be supervising animator... I want (Yôji) Takeshige and (Noboru) Yoshida to take care of art direction.

OTHER ISSUES TO SOLVE:

As far as money goes, producer (Toshio) Suzuki will no doubt sort something out. His bad back will probably sort itself out.

For our key animators, we'll promote our junior animators. Does anyone come to mind? No names leap out at me... Hmm.

Obviously, our greatest problem is the advanced age of the director.

Hmm...

Will the story come together?

Hmm...

We need to whittle it down.

Hmm...

That's all.

*The three-year production period actually stretched to seven years.

July 2016

Hayao Miyazaki

This project proposal was written as he contemplated embarking on his next film.



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